

Idaho's \$1 billion school election day: a district-by-district breakdown

Kevin Richert 02/23/2023

<https://www.idahoednews.org/news/idahos-1-billion-school-election-day-a-district-by-district-breakdown/>

It could be the biggest school election day in Idaho history.

On March 14, voters will decide on bonds and levies running more than **\$1 billion** — making it, easily, **the spendiest election day in the past several years.**

About \$700 million of the March 14 bond issues and levies have a set lifespan. If passed, the bond issues would run from 10 to 30 years. The levies would run from one to 10 years.

Then there's Lewiston's five-year supplemental levy, for a projected \$100 million.

Then there's Coeur d'Alene, which is using a clause in state law to pursue a permanent, \$25 million-a-year supplemental levy. If this levy passes, this could push the election day pricetag above the \$1 billion mark.

To help you figure out what's at stake, we've collected sample ballots from the 47 districts seeking a ballot measure next month.

And since school elections are confusing, we spell out the rules about bond issues and levies here.

Here are district-by-district thumbnails:

Nampa: \$210.2 million bond issue.

What's at stake? In the biggest measure on the March 14 ballot, Nampa is seeking money for a host of projects, including \$100 million to replace Nampa High School; \$30 million for a new career and technical center; \$26 million for renovations at Skyview High School; and \$25.5 million to replace Centennial Elementary School.

What's the process? With a successful bond issue, a district enters into long-term debt to bankroll building projects. All bond issues require a two-thirds supermajority to pass.

Kuna: \$111.4 million bond issue.

What's at stake? The growing suburban district is looking at several projects, including a new elementary school; a classroom wing and athletic facilities at Swan Falls High School; and renovations and additions at Fremont and Kuna middle schools.

Lewiston: Five-year, \$100 million supplemental levy (projected).

What's at stake? The levy accounts for 36% of Lewiston's annual budget. The money would go toward staffing, career-technical education, and K-3 reading, among other areas.

What's the process? In Lewiston's case, it's complicated. Most supplemental levies have a set price tag. As a "charter" school district that predates statehood, Lewiston can run a supplemental levy for a set tax rate — in this case, \$395 per \$100,000 of taxable value. This levy would generate a projected \$100 over five years, Superintendent Lance Hansen said. Lewiston's current levy, \$420 per \$100,000 of taxable value, brought in about \$19.6 million this year, Hansen said. In all cases, supplemental levies can cover a variety of projects or day-to-day needs. All supplemental levies require only a simple majority to pass.

Jefferson County: Two separate bond issues, totaling \$80 million.

What's at stake? The big bond issue, at \$75 million, would go largely toward a new middle school. The \$5 million bond issue would add a gym at Roberts Elementary School.

Fremont County: \$59.98 million bond issue.

What's at stake? Additions at several schools, including CTE and agricultural additions at North Fremont High School.

Coeur d'Alene: Permanent, \$25 million-a-year supplemental levy. Five-year, \$25 million plant facilities levy.

What's at stake? The supplemental levy accounts for about a fourth of Coeur d'Alene's annual budget. The biggest chunk of the money, more than \$7.2 million, goes to teacher and staff salaries. About \$4.6 million goes into an array of maintenance areas, such as transportation staffing.

The separate plant facilities levy would go largely into deferred maintenance, with a total of \$2.5 million going toward safety and security.

What's the process? Most supplemental levies run only one to two years, subject to renewal. But Coeur d'Alene is using a state law that allows for a permanent levy, with simple majority support. Districts can seek permanent taxing authority if a levy has been on the books for at least seven straight years, and if it accounts for at least a fifth of the district's maintenance and operations fund.

Attachment 3

Plant facilities levies cover maintenance and upkeep projects. They require a supermajority of 55% to two-thirds to pass, depending on their size. Coeur d'Alene's levy will require a 55% majority to pass.

Cassia County: Ten-year, \$32.7 million plant facilities levy.

What's at stake? Roof repairs are the big-ticket item, at \$7.5 million. The district also proposes spending \$6.3 million to swap out aging technology.

Oneida County: \$29 million bond issue.

What's at stake? A new elementary school.

Lakeland: Two-year, \$19.04 million supplemental levy; six-year, \$6.88 million plant facilities levy.

What's at stake? The bulk of the supplemental levy, more than \$12.2 million, would go into teacher and staff salaries.

Pocatello-Chubbuck: Two-year, \$16.5 million supplemental levy.

What's at stake? Largely salaries, to the tune of close to \$11 million. This proposal represents a reduction from the current two-year, \$18.5 million levy.

Idaho Falls: Two-year, \$13.6 million supplemental levy.

What's at stake? More than \$10.8 million for salaries and benefits.

Post Falls: Two-year, \$11.92 million supplemental levy.

What's at stake? More than \$4.1 million would go into salaries; nearly \$2.4 million would go into building maintenance.

Twin Falls: Two-year, \$11.4 million supplemental levy.

What's at stake: \$8 million for staff salaries; \$2.6 million for security, including school resource officers and security guards in elementary schools.

Parma: Ten-year, \$8.55 million levy for the Canyon-Owyhee School Service Agency, which provides career-technical education, special education and alternative education for five school districts.

Notus: Ten-year, \$3.56 million plant facilities levy; 10-year, \$2.66 million levy for COSSA.

Castleford: \$6 million bond issue.

American Falls: Two-year, \$5.5 million supplemental levy.

Boundary County: Two-year, \$4.8 million supplemental levy.

St. Maries: Two-year, \$4.14 million supplemental levy.

Blackfoot: Two-year, \$4 million supplemental levy.

Emmett: Two-year, \$3 million supplemental levy.

Kootenai: Two-year, \$2.75 million supplemental levy.

Jerome: Two-year, \$2.5 million supplemental levy.

Weiser: Four-year, \$2 million plant facilities levy.

Kendrick: Two-year, \$1.5 million supplemental levy; five-year, \$300,000 plant facilities levy.

Potlatch: One-year, \$1.6 million supplemental levy.

Jerome: Two-year, \$1.52 million supplemental levy.

Challis: Two-year, \$1.4 million supplemental levy.

Snake River: Two-year, \$1.4 million supplemental levy.

Bear Lake County: Two-year, \$1.3 million supplemental levy.

Cascade: Two-year, \$1.3 million supplemental levy.

Genesee: One-year, \$1.18 million supplemental levy.

Payette: Two-year, \$1 million supplemental levy.

Grace: Two-year, \$900,000 supplemental levy.

Meadows Valley: Two-year, \$746,800 supplemental levy.

West Jefferson: Two-year, \$720,000 supplemental levy.

Soda Springs: One-year, \$698,000 supplemental levy.

Camas County: Two two-year supplemental levies, totaling \$600,000.

Horseshoe Bend: Two-year, \$600,000 supplemental levy.

Sugar-Salem: Two-year, \$600,000 supplemental levy.

Hansen: Two-year, \$580,000 supplemental levy.

Ririe: Two-year, \$580,000 supplemental levy.

Butte County: Two-year, \$320,000 supplemental levy; two-year, \$206,000 plant facilities levy.

Clark County: Two-year, \$500,000 supplemental levy.

Highland: One-year, \$499,000 supplemental levy.

Swan Valley: Five-year, \$375,000 plant facilities levy.

West Side: One-year, \$90,000 supplemental levy.

Idaho Education News data analyst Randy Schrader contributed to this report.

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SUCCESSFUL BOND LEVY ELECTIONS

to be levied initially during the
2022 - 2023 School Year

Based on
Sept. 2022
Valuation

DATE OF ELECTION	COUNTY(IES)	SCHOOL DISTRICT	DOLLARS REQUESTED	PERCENT OF APPROVAL		NO	TOTAL	% of voters	County Population
				APPROVAL	YES				
03/08/2022	Madison	321 Madison	25,500,000	67.07%	1387	681	2068	4%	50,979
08/30/2022	Gooding/Jerome/Lincoln	261 Jerome	12,000,000	68.77%	469	213	682	3%	24,081
			37,500,000	67.49%	1,856	894	2,750		

UNSUCCESSFUL BOND LEVY ELECTIONS

2022 - 2023 School Year

% of voters

DATE OF ELECTION	COUNTY(IES)	SCHOOL DISTRICT	DOLLARS REQUESTED	PERCENT OF APPROVAL		NO	TOTAL	% of voters
				APPROVAL	YES			
3/8/2022	Boundary	101 Boundary	\$16,400,000	53.79%	1158	995	2,153	32%
3/8/2022	Canyon	139 Vallivue	\$55,000,000	64.38%	1345	744	2,089	2%
3/8/2022	Jefferson/Madison	251 Jefferson	\$80,000,000	41.17%	1693	2419	4,112	13%
5/17/2022	Bonneville/Jefferson	252 Ririe	\$1,500,000	55.52%	347	278	625	1%
5/17/2022	Bonneville/Jefferson	252 Ririe	\$1,500,000	57.80%	363	265	628	1%
5/17/2022	Elmore	193 Mountain Home	\$79,000,000	45.87%	1632	1926	3,558	13%
8/30/2022	Boundary	101 Boundary	\$16,400,000	40.94%	1422	2051	3,473	29%
8/30/2022	Bonneville/Jefferson	252 Ririe	\$1,500,000	64.17%	206	115	321	0%
8/30/2022	Canyon	134 Middleton	\$59,435,000	53.52%	1567	1361	2,928	3%
8/30/2022	Canyon	139 Vallivue	\$55,000,000	65.71%	2489	1299	3,788	4%
			365,735,000	51.62%	12,222	11,453	23,675	

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